



## Implementing Journaling in the Home

Journal writing is an important step in helping children develop strong written communication skills. It encourages creativity and allows children the freedom to express themselves, thus boosting self-confidence, self-awareness, and self-esteem. The flexibility of journaling means that it can be incorporated into many different areas of learning such as math, science, social studies and even visual arts. Journaling can improve spelling and grammar while also supporting reading skills and providing them practice in written communication.

### Structured Journaling:

- Science Journal: Your child can record scientific investigations, hypotheses and outcomes.
- Math Journal: Here your child can record problems, formulas and how they solved problems. This is a great resource for your child to look back on as they tackle more difficult problems.
- Nature Journal: Your child can record observations about the natural world, draw pictures of trees, flowers and make predictions about life cycles.
- Feelings Journal: In this journal, your child can have a space to write about how they are feeling. It is a safe space to express emotions. This may help them identify and put their emotions to words more easily.
- Visual Arts Journal: Here your child can write about the various art projects they have created or plan to create, they can make plans for future projects and reflect about previous projects.

### Independent Journaling:

During the time set aside in your day for Independent Learning, invite your child to journal, but allow them to make the decision. If possible, create a Writing Center in your home where your child can keep their journal, along with any necessary writing supplies. When your child completes an entry in their journal, encourage them to share their picture and writing with you. If they ask for help writing or spelling, you can provide assistance, but avoid instruction. The goal is to support their creativity!

Instead of choosing a topic for your child to write about, encourage their self-expression and creativity by allowing them to write what is meaningful to them. Ask open-ended questions and reflect back to children what you see in their pictures. Avoid using journaling as a time to teach skills.

| Try This:  | Avoid This:  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What would you like to tell me today?</li><li>✓ That picture reminds me of what happened the other day when you fell and hurt your knee.</li><li>✓ I see you built a castle with Legos. Do you want to write a story about it?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How should you hold your pencil?</li><li>✓ Today we are going to write about the weather. What does it look like outside?</li><li>✓ How does a B look?</li></ul> |